

DIFFICULTIES IN THE QUR'AN ON INTERNET

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INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is the basic source of Islamic teachings revealed on the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, through angel Gabriel over a period of twenty-three years. The Qur'an builds a society on the principles of Tawheed (Unity of ALLAH), prophethood and the Day of Judgment. These notions were not acceptable to the pagans of Arabia. Further, the Jews and Christians were not happy with the arrival of the last prophet. As Islam appeared out of Arabia in the seventh Century and rapidly spread in all directions, for almost, millennium Christian Europe felt it challenged and threatened by the last monotheistic religion, which claimed to complete its two predecessors. Bernard Lewis says that the struggle between these systems has now lasted for some fourteen Centuries. It began with the advent of Islam in the 7th Century and has continued virtually to the present day (1)

The western scholars have distorted the views on the Qur'an and the prophet of Islam due to their own reasons. According to Norman Daniel, the west could not see the Islamic faith as prospering one. That is why, there existed Holy wars of crusades and Jihad. Further, the existence of Islam made the west profoundly uneasy. They consider Islam as a danger-unpredictable and immeasurable. (2) On the basis of these and other reasons Western scholars, travelers, poets, philologists, anthropologists, sociologists, Historians and Tourists wrote a lot on the East and Islam as a religion.

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This collected material by Edward said was called orientalism.
(3).

He says that one ought not to think that orientalism is simply a structure of lies and myths, which were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away. It is a created body of theory and practice in which for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment. Continued investment made orientalism as a system of knowledge about the Orient defined narrowly the Arab world and broadly the world of Islam. (4) The Qur'an, the word of ALLAH, has been under attack from the very beginning. According to Goldziher, Muhammad built his eschatological message with borrowed blocks (5) Macdonald believes that the Qur'an is simply a collection of fragments gathered up from – trance utterances of Muhammad. (6) For Gibb, the Qur'an is a compilation of Muhammad's own ideas. (7)

Recently, Jochen has supplied a list of objections/seeming contradictions on the Qur'an naming it "Difficulties in the Qur'an on Internet". I have tried to answer these objections and some answers are also sent to the person concerned through Internet, but the reply is yet awaited.

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LIST OF THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE QUR'AN ANSWERED

Internal Contradictions:

1. The event of the worship of the Golden Calf
2. Was Jonah Cast on the dessert shore or was he not?
3. Moses and the Injil
4. Can slander of chaste women be forgiven?
5. How do we receive the record on the judgment day?
6. Can Angel disobey?
7. Three contradictions in (2:97) and (16:101-103)
8. Jinnes and men created for worship or for hell? Created only to serve God (51:56), many of them made for hell (7:179)
9. Could ALLAH have a son? Sura 39:4 affirms and Sura 6:101 denies this possibility.
10. One creator or many?

External Contradictions:

11. Saul, David and Goliath.
12. A Samaritan tempting the Israelites in Moses time.
13. Moses and the Gospel.

CONTRADICTION NO. 1:

THE EVENT OF THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF

1. Does Aaron Share in Israelite's guilt?
 - a. No (20:85-90)
 - b. Yes (20:92 & 7:15)
2. The Israelites repented about worshiping the golden calf BEFORE Moses returned from the mountain (7:149), yet they refused to repent but rather continued to worship the calf until Moses came back (20:91).

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

In Surah (20:85) ALLAH Moses we have tested thy people in thy absence "The Samri had led them astray" ALLAH did not

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place any blame on Aaron. Aaron admitted that he did nothing wrong, O My people, you are being tested in this. So follow me and obey my command (20:90).

Since Moses knew this (Because ALLAH told him already), why did he place the blame on Aaron? “O Aaron, what kept thy back, and then thou sawest them going wrong, from following me? Didst thou then disobey my order”? (20:92). And why did he drag him by the hair (7:150)? These two accounts contradict. According to (7:151), Aaron was partly responsible for sins of his people because Moses prayed for Aaron’s forgiveness.

And this time (contrary to his other confession), Aaron admits to idol worshiping in verse 150, “because of the people who really killed him when he tried to resist him. But seemingly, he gave up and did as they said.

Furthermore in (7:149), the people repented about worshiping the golden calf, before Moses returned but according to (20:91), they refused to repent but rather continued to worship the calf until Moses returned.

A MUSLIM’S RESPONSE BY RANDY DESMOND

In no place does Aaron (Peace be upon him) admits to idol making worshiping. In fact the people go near to slaying him (7:150). Aaron is only guilty of not wanting to split up the children of Israel.

As far as the sequence of Moses returning and the children of Israel’s repenting, there is no conflict. In (7:149 & 150) both start with the Arabic WA LAMMA which means “and when (at the time of)” or “as for when”. This is not denoting the sequence of time according to the Arabic.

Answer 1:

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According to the above mentioned Quranic passage, we come to know that Moses asked for forgiveness from ALLAH for Aaron. Therefore, it became clear that Aaron did not pray for forgiveness for himself. If Aaron himself had asked for forgiveness, then this would have been a case of contradiction. One can rightly claim that Aaron committed no mistake. Thus, he did not share in Israelities's guilt. This is obvious from the passage. Moses merely questioned Aaron that if Israelities had started worshipping the calf he would have left them and followed him (Moses). The question is whether, it was possible to do so at that time? The answer is in negative. How was it possible to leave the people without a leader? When Aaron saw Israelies are worshipping the calf, he admonished them. But when they continued to do so and tried to kill him, he abstained and waited for his brother.

Randy was right to state that Aaron is only a guilty of not wanting to split up the children of Israel. Aaron (in the old testament of story) ordered to bring the gold for making a mother calf, fashioned with a gravity tools, and built an alter before the calf (Exod. Xxxii. 2-5, the Holy Bible, P-78). Our Version differs from that of the Old Testament. We cannot believe that Aaron, who was appointed by ALLAH to assist Moses as Allalh's Messenger could descend so low as to reduce the people into idolatry, whatever his human weakness might be:

ii) This is also questioned that whether the people repented, before Moses came back to them or otherwise.

Moses was furious enough when he came to know that the people worshipped the calf after him. It was natural for Moses that he showed his anger to the Israelies. This itself shows that at the arrival of Moses, people were still worshipping the calf. It is also to say that the Qur'an never stated that people have repented

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before Moses came to them. One should be clear invited that in each case only those points are referred to, which are necessary to the argument in hand. (8). Randy Desmond has also stated that the words WA LAMMA mean at the time of and not denoting the sequence in time. On the basis of this discussion we can say that there is no conflict between 7:149 and 20:91.

CONTRADICTION NO. 2:

WAS JONAH CAST ON THE DESERT SHORE OR WAS HE NOT?

“Then we cast him on the desert shore while He was sick” (37:45).

“Had not graced from his lord reached him, he would indeed has been cast off on the naked shore while he was reprobate” (68:49)

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

Surah (37:45, Al-Saffat) read “Fa.Nabadhanaahu-Bil-Araa’l wa-huwa saqeemun”. A verbatim translation is:

“Then we cast him in the desert plain and he was sick”.

The well known Muslim translators render this verse as follows:

Pickthall: Then we cast him on the desert shore when he was ill.

Yusuf Ali: But we cast him forth on the naked shore in the state of sickness.

Shakir: Then we cast him on the vacant surface of earth while he was sick.

Contrary to that, Surah (68: Al Qur'an) has in verse 49, Law laa an tedaaraka hu nimatun rabbihi la nubidha – Bil Arra”. Wa huwa madhmoomun” translated verbatim means:

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If not had reached him a favour from his Lord, he surely would have been cast on the desert plain and he would have been reprobate or according to:

Pickthall: Had it not been that favour from his Lord reached him he surely has been cast into the wilderness while he was reprobate.

Yusuf Ali: Had not grace from his Lord reached him, he would indeed have been cast off on the naked shore in disgrace.

Though the translation differ in style and in some minor points, all duly agree that in verse (37:145) Jonah (Yunus) is reported to have actually been cast off on the desert shore.

In contradiction to this they again duly agree that in verse (68:49) Jonah is reported not to have been cast off on the desert shore, because this fate only would have hit him if the divine grace had not pardoned him.

Answer 2:

There is no contradiction in Surah (37:145) and (68:49). The well known Muslim translators have rendered these verses differing in style and in some minor points. For example, Pickthall translated the verse (37:145) then we cast him on a desert shore while he was sick. He translated the other verse (68:49), Had it not been the favour from his Lord reached him, he surely had been cast into the wilderness while he was reprobate.

When we read both the verses we become able to draw the conclusion, that Jonah was cast on the desert shore. Thus he was saved from the misery. It was awarded him as a result of his repentance. God accepted his repentance and pardoned him.

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The situation reveals that the Jonah has been granted with better condition to get himself flourished...The growing of the gourd-tree and the milk (of goat) were the special blessings which were sent by the Gracious God. The situation of the sickness would have continued, if the divine grace had not pardoned him with such kind of above mentioned favours. Therefore, no contradiction can be claimed on this point. (9).

CONTRADICTION NO. 3:

MOSES AND THE INJIL

Jesus is born more that 1,000 years after Moses, but in 7:157 ALLAH speaks to Moses about what is written in the Injil (the book given to the Jesus).

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

Many verses in the Qur'an make clear that the Injil is given to the Jesus who was born several hundred years (about 1,400) after Moses. But in Surah (7:155-157), is the problem that Moses prays to ALLAH and in ALLAH's response to Moses we read those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures), in the Taurat and the Gospel Sura (7:157), the obvious problem is that the Gospel has been revealed yet at that time and no body was able to find anything in it a non-existing Gospel.

A MUSLIM'S RESPOSE BY RANDY DESMOND

We should realize that this is God telling Moses that Muhammad (PBUH) will be found in Taurah (Torah) and Injil (Gospel). If the past tense seems confusing, it should not. Arabic and Hebrew, both used past tense when prophecies were mentioned.

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FURTHER OBJECTION TO THE RESPONSE

The author of the objection again says:

It is not speaking in the past tense but in present tense (“Whom” they find mentioned).

Answer 3:

The contradiction is solved by studying the drift of the verses in detail. The point lies in the applicability of the same meaning of word in present and future tense. The word YAJEDONAHU is not confined to one era or the particular period. It applies to both eras i.e. present and future.

The writer is not willing to accept the response of Randy Desmond, who translated it referring to the future. The writer insists that meaning of the verse refer to the present. It is quite possible that the khatab of the verse is now moved from Moses to Muhammad (PBUH).

The Jews and the Christians of the time are addressed. It is told to them that they should follow the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who is unlettered. His name was written in Torah as well as in Injil. If we take this meaning granted, then there is no contradiction at all. Abdullah Yusuf Ali has accepted this meaning. The author's worry is that the passage speaks in present. The answer to this worry can be given that, this may be one of the cases of Aslub-e-Qur'an. For example, in Surah Baqarah Verse 40, the address is towards Bani Israel. After this, some other statements are mentioned. In Verse 47, the address is again towards Bani Israel. This case appears to be the same. The story of Moses is interrupted by giving information about Muhammad (PBUH). Later, appearance in the Torah and Injil the address to

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Moses continues. Thus, the seeming contradiction claimed by the author is solved. (10).

CONTRADICTION NO. 4:

CAN SLANDER OF CHASTE WOMEN BE FORGIVEN?

Yes (24:23) No. (24:5)

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

Those who slander chaste women are cursed forever (in this life and hereafter) in the Surah (24:23).

But Surah 24:5, says that they can be forgiven if they repent after they have been beaten with 80 stripes. Since it says to let them come back into full rights as members of society, restoring their rights to testify, because ALLAH is (also) oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

The earthly forgiveness would not have any foundation or counterpart if ALLAH would not extend forgiveness as well. That is the very basis on which He commands earthly forgiveness.

Answer 4:

The Verses 4 & 5 of Surah Al-Noor say that those who slander chaste women will be forgiven after 80 lashes, Provided if one has repented, and became noble and pious citizen. The Verse 23 of the same chapter reads that who slanders chaste women are cursed forever (in this life and hereafter).

The seeming contradiction is claimed by Jochen, the author of this difficulty. If we read both the Verses altogether, these convey one and the same message/meaning i.e. the person who slanders the chaste women, for not providing four witnesses, received 80 stripes. He also loses his credibility as a witness in the society; However, if he repents and does good, will be

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forgiven. Therefore, one can say that this is a case of reconciliation. There is no contradiction in the verses.

The contradiction lies in the human mind, because it cannot solve the confusion. When with utmost effort, it becomes able to solve the issue, the contradiction vanishes/disappears.

CONTRADICTION NO. 5:

How do we receive the record on the judgment day? On judgment day the lost people are given the record (of their deeds): behind their backs (84:10), or their left hands (69:25).

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

Surah (84:10) says that the lost people are given the record (of their bad deeds) behind their backs, but in Surah (69:25), it is given in their left hands.

Yusuf Ali states that their hands are tied behind their backs (where does he get that from?) and it is given into their left hand behind their back (84:10), but that's not what the Qur'an says, and a "harmonizing assumption" has to be made to resolve the problem.

A MUSLIM'S RESPONSE BY RANDY DESMOND

Yusuf Ali assumes that the Qur'an does not conflict. His "harmonizing assumption" does not assure any thing contradictory to the Qur'an and it is perfectly acceptable.

Answer 5:

The writer claims contradiction by this question. How do we receive the record on judgment day? On judgment day the lost people are given the record (of their bad deeds) behind their back (85\4:10), in their left hand (69:25).

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A response by Randy Desmond is not accepted by the writer.

Randy has based his answer on the interpretation of Abdullah Yusuf Ali and said that Abdullah's "harmonization assumption" does not assure anything contradictory to the Qur'an, We endorse this interpretation and further add that in Surah 4:47, it is said that, "O you people of the book believe in what we have revealed confirming what was already with you before we efface and turn them hind ward or curse them, means we will turn them backward.

This is a hint of giving record behind his back (84:10). Thus he may be given his record in his left hand (69:25).

Understanding this Verse, we claim that there is no contradiction between (84:10) and (69:25). It is a matter of reconciliation of verses. When the Qur'an is read as a whole, many verses stand clear. This is one of the cases of such Verses. Therefore, we say that reconciliation rules out seeming contradiction.

CONTRADICTION NO. 6:

CAN ANGEL DISOBEY?

No angel is arrogant, they all obey ALLAH (16:49-50), but "and behold, we said to the angels, "Bow Down to Adam". And they bowed down, except Iblis. He refused and was haughty (2:34).

DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHOR OF THE OBJECTION

About the angels: For none are arrogant (before their Lord). They all fear their Lord, high above them, and they do all they are commanded (16:49-50).

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And behold, we said to the angels, "Bow down to Adam." And they bowed down, except Iblis, he refused and was haughty (2:34). The command of ALLAH is given to the angels. Since Iblis is accused of not being obedient, he has to be one of the angels. Contradicting (16:50), he refused: was disobedient and haughty, arrogant (before his Lord).

Answer 6:

The angels cannot disobey. They are obedient creature of ALLAH. They are of different nature. The nature of Iblis (Satan) has very much been declared in the Qur'an that he was Jinn. (1) Jinns may be a kind of angels and having different identity at the same time. He was present at the time while the angels were being ordered to bow down. They (angels) bowed down while Iblis did not. He disobeyed, because he was not an angel. He was present at that time when the angels were addressed so he was to be considered as an angel. (12) There is no seeming contradiction. It is a matter of understanding.

CONTRADICTION NO. 7:

THREE CONTRADICTIONS IN (2:97) AND (16:101-103)

1. Who brings the revelation from ALLAH to Muhammad (PBUH)?

The angel Gibriel (2:97), or the Holy Spirit (16:102)

2. The new revelation confirms the old (2:97) or Substitutes it (16:101)?

3. The Qur'an is pure Arabic (16:103), but there are numerous foreign and non Arabic words in it?

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Answer 7:

The answer of the first seeming contradiction is that the Gibrael and the Holy Spirit are the one and the same person. Secondly, the Qur'an does confirm the earlier revelations in the sense that these were revealed from Almighty ALLAH. Islam is a religion of Almighty. ALLAH started from Adam and ended with Muhammad (PBUH). So the message given to Ibrahim, Moses and Jesus were true and authentic. This is the meaning conveyed by 2:97 and while 16:101 speaks about abrogation of the previous shariahs, which are endorsed by the Qur'an, which were relevant to Islamic shariah, such as Qisas etc. (13)

Thirdly Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translations for the word "Pure" has become the bone of contention. The contention is that the Qur'an is in Arabic language. If some foreign words are found in it that does not mean that the Qur'an is not pure Arabic. Similarly, if someone does address to the people in Arabic and he uses some English words in his speech, would that mean, that he did not deliver his speech in Arabic? The word pure used by Yusuf Ali has confused the writer. He wants to see the Qur'an as a pure Arabic Qur'an (14).

No foreign word should be part of it, which is ridiculous.

CONTRADICTION NO. 8:

JINNES AND MEN CREATED FOR WORSHIP OR FOR HELL?

CREATED ONLY TO SERVE GOD [SURA 51:56], MANY OF THEM MADE FOR HELL [SURA 7:179].

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There should be no problem to say that all of them were created to worship and serve God. However, they have free will and if some or many decided to disobey they will be punished in hell. But to state that many were made for hell is an obvious contradiction to the first statement – or else we must conclude that they were created in order to serve ALLAH in hell, but this would require a serious shift in the understanding of the meaning of hell as well as the issue of justice in who is sent to hell.

Answer 8:

ALLAH has created each and everything. Human beings are created for worship, yet they have the choice to follow the commands of ALLAH, the Almighty, or not. So one cannot say that many of them are created for hell. Q 7,179 if read together, it clearly states that the people heaving hearts understand not, having eyes see not, having ear's hear not. Therefore, one should ask himself that were these people be in the gardens in the hereafter. Obviously, they will burn in the hell. This is the meaning of the verse. "Many are the Jines and men we have been made for hell". There is no difficulty in order to understand the verse at all. Abdullah Yusuf Ali also interpreted the verse saying "though they have apparently all of the faculties of reasons and perception, they have so deadened them that those faculties do not work, and they go head long into hell. They are, as it were, made for hell.

CONTRADICTION NO. 9:

COULD ALLAH HAVE A SON? SURA 39:4 AFFIRMS AND SURA 6:101 DENIES THIS POSSIBILITY

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39:4

Had ALLAH wished to take to himself a son, he could have chosen whom he pleased out of those whom he doth create:

But Glory be to him (he is above such things)

He is ALLAH, the one, the irresistible (Yusuf Ali)

If ALLAH had willed to choose a son, He could have chosen what he wanted of that which he hath created.

Be he Glorified! He is ALLAH, the one, the Absolute (Pickthall). 6:101

Wonderful originator of the heavens and the earth

How can he have a son when he has no consort?

He created all things, and he hath full knowledge of all things. Sura 39:4 and 6:101 agree on the actuality, that ALLAH does not have a son, but they contradict each other in the issue of ability or possibility. Sura 39:4 clearly states that God could have taken himself a son from among his creation, i.e. without the necessity of a consort to father such a son. But Sura 6:101 clearly rejects the same idea as a logical impossibility.

Answer 9:

Sura 39:4 states "Had ALLAH wished to take to himself a son, He could have done so, but glory be to Him ("He is above such things"). The verse is self explanatory and the argument is against the Christians who claim that Jesus is the son of God. Abdullah Yusuf Ali says "it is blasphemy to say that ALLAH begot a son". (13) if ALLAH had wished to choose a son he could have chosen without the consort. That was not impossible for him. (He has the power over all things). To claim contradiction on such issues shows that the objectionist could not comprehend the style

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of argument. It is merely a question of style, hence no contradiction should be claimed.

CONTRADICTION NO. 10:

ONE CREATOR OR MANY? THE QUR'AN USES TWICE THE PHRASE THAT ALLAH IS "THE BEST OF CREATOR'S" [33:14,37:125] WHAT OTHER CREATORS ARE IN MIND? ON THE OTHER HAND, MANY VERSES MAKE CLEAR THAT ALLAH ALONE IS "THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS" [E.G. 39:62] THERE IS NOTHING LEFT FOR OTHERS TO BE A CREATOR OF.

How many creators are there?

Then fashioned we the drop a clot, then fashioned we the clot a little lump, then fashioned we the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be ALLAH, the best of creators! --- Sura 23:14

Will ye cry unto heal and forsake the best of creators, ---?

--- Sura 37:125

How can it be, that ALLAH is the best of creators (Pleasure)? What other creators are in view when the Qur'an makes these statements?

After all, we find it stated very clearly that there is only one creator (2:54, 6:102, 12:101, 13:16, 14:10, 15:86, 35:3, 36:81, 39:46, 39:62, 40:62, 42:11, 56:59, 59:24), in particular.

ALLAH is creator of all things, and he is Guardian over all things.

--- Sura 39:62

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Such is ALLAH, your lord, the creator of all things, there is no God save him. How then are ye perverted?

--- Sura 6:102

Say: who is lord of the heavens and the earth? Say ALLAH. --- say: ALLAH is the creator of all things, and he is the one, the Almighty.

--- Sura 13:16

If all things are created by ALLAH, the one, then nothing is created by anyone else, and so, none else can legitimately be called a creator.

Do all the above verses use the same word for “creator” and “creators?”

The various translators deal with this issue differently ---

To tell you the truth, I see no contradiction in it (Arabically speaking) in a way it's saying “Allahu Akbar = God is greater”

Two other points:

According to tafseer Al-Qurtubi, it is used like this because Jesus created too (remember the Quranic story where the young Jesus created a bird, which is similar to the apocrypha).

And another point in the tafseer, creation can mean to man in the sense of making. Like I created this email message.

In the other words, I think that it's a weak contradiction.

However, if there is seeming contradiction, it is not so because contradiction, the strong emphasis is on the oneness of God. It is still an expressing. There is often the claim that everything fits together in the Qur'an perfectly. Here is not a contradiction. Furthermore, Al-Qurtubi's explanations serve to strengthen the recognition of the unique position Jesus is given in the Qur'an.

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Answer 10:

What other creators are in view-objection is very absurd.

1. It is the style of argument when things are questioned.
2. Hundred of verses announce the oneness of ALLAH. That is the basic claim of Islam and is admitted by the objectionist.
3. The writer should not have claimed inconsistency in the message because he himself admits that there is no contradiction.
4. The unique position of Jesus given in the Qur'an is conditional with the words "by ALLAH's leave".

SAUL, DAVID AND GOLIATH

OBJECTION NO. 11:

Conclusion of Jochen:

The Qur'anic story of Talut exhibits many historical inaccuracies. In particular we recognized the merging of several events that took place decades or even more than a century apart. The Motivation for this version of the account is obviously the current situation of the early Muslim community in Madina which was in deed of being encouraged for the upcoming battles.

Muhammad uses examples from "history" to inspire and encourage his companion follow him in these battles and that ALLAH would give them victory just as he had given victory to the believers in earlier times, when they were in similar situations. He is not, at this point, concerned with historical accuracy and so, in order to make the account more applicable to the current situation, he takes liberties with history and produces a story

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which is conspicuously divergent from the historical narrative in the Biblical account.

Muhammad's message appeals to the experience and circumstances of his listeners, who were forced from their homes and families for the sake of following Muhammad's message. That would indeed be a reason for them to fight. But it has no foundation in the history of the Israelites at the time of Samuel.

Through the Qur'an (presumably from ALLAH) Muhammad is asking his followers (through the mouth of Samuel) if they would fight for ALLAH if they were so commanded. This exactly was Muhammad's call (2:244), and the current believers should follow the example of the old believers..... And the displeasure of ALLAH on those who refused to fight (in the old story) is a warning to the current listeners that ALLAH certainly will be displeased if they act likewise. This is Muhammad's way of indirect accusation against those who would not want to fight without having to confront them directly and personally. Honor and shame are very important elements in Middle Eastern culture and that might be one reason for using a story, since this allowed not having to shame anyone by naming them directly for their resistance, but nevertheless effectively communicating to them what ALLAH would think of them depending on their action.

To this day story telling, parables, are very popular means in the Middle East to communicate truth. Basically, Muhammad is creating a parable to get his message across in this indirect but nevertheless clear manner. This same method is used by the prophet Nathan to convict king David of his sin (2 Samuel 12:1-10) and Jesus tells many parables for the same reason, for example see Matthew (21:33-45) where the intended meaning is understood clearly by the audience. The problem is that Muhammad has chosen a historical figure for his parable and corrupted historical

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truth for his own ends. This is the reason we cannot accept this passage as a revelation from God, who is the truth, nor Muhammad as a true prophet. He has shown himself as an effective communicator, a great leader and motivator, but the standard to evaluate a prophet is whether he speaks truth, no whether he can get a large following through his oratory and people skill.

Muhammad recognizes that the bottom line is about truth. And so he concludes this section with

2:252 These are the Signs of ALLAH. We rehearse them to thee in truth: verily thou art one of the messengers.

This is the ultimate purpose of this whole story. The listener is again called to accept Muhammad as the messenger of God. But the standard has to be truth. And according to his own standard of truth pointed to in this verse, Muhammad has failed this test. How then we accept him as a true messenger of God.

Answer to the objection:

The learned author is making the comparison of the Qur'an and the Bible. He has pointed out eight points where he thinks that the objections lie. Now we try to answer these objections. (The objections are mentioned on Internet)

- No. 1 According to the objectionist the Qur'an does not tell the name of the Prophet. This is not the point to be raised for. At many places the Qur'an does not tell the names because it is not a story telling book. Further, without telling the name the purpose was being achieved, so there was no need to mention the name. In answer to the objection that the Qur'an has named the king Talut while the Bible has called him Saul, it is to state that the Bible has used its

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original name while the Qur'an has used his nickname i.s. laqab.

- No. 2 According to the Bible, the Israelities left Egypt by God's command and they were even sent away with the gifts. The question is that if it was so why the Israelities were wandering in the wilderness of Sinai? In fact they were forced from their homes as the Qur'an claims so that they may be tested whether they fight in the cause of ALLAH or not. However, it may be true that they wanted to have a king because the new judges were evil.
- No. 3 In the Bible the Prophet was displeased with the proposal of having a king while the Qur'an, on the other hand, presents the Prophet asking them whether they should fight for God if their demand was to be fulfilled. There is no contradiction at all because the God almighty knew that they would not fight. Therefore, he questioned them whether they will fight in the cause of Him if so happened.
- No. 4 The question is that under the leadership of the Prophet Samuel the Israelities were being defeated again and again, therefore the leaders of that time asked for the appointment of the Chief as they were of the opinion that their Prophet is old enough to compete the enemies. In fact at that time the Amaliqua were in power and they were chastising the Israelities.
- No. 5 This objection is baseless. In Q.2, 247 there is no mention of such a thing that many of the leaders had rejected the king.
- No. 6 According to the Qur'an the return of the Ark was a sign of ALLAH Almighty that Talut was sent from Him. The statement of Bible is that the Palestinians pushed the Ark towards the Israelities. Torah also narrates that for the

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Parisians it was difficult to keep the Ark, therefore, they wanted to get rid of it. That is why after seven months they returned it to the Israelities. After studying the whole narration we come to the conclusion that the statement of the Qur'an is true because the Ark is declared as the sign of ALLAH and Muhammad peace be upon is said to be among the Prophets while Bible has nothing to having said so. Further it seems that the story was fabricated and was added in the Bible so that it may become popular among the ordinary people. Moreover, Bible says that the Ark remained with them for a long time and it was kept in Yarim, which was part of Bani Israils territory.

- No. 7 The basic objection raised is that the story of Talut is not mentioned in Samuel 11-12, or even in the complete account of Saul's reign ranging over chapters 9-31. Instead this story is mentioned in Judges 7, where Gideon led the Israelities into battle. The Qur'an mentions this story in 2, 249. The learned author calls it historical compression. He is of the view perhaps that the Qur'an should have followed the Bible in all even in the minor details. He does not perhaps know that the function of the Qur'an is not only to verify but also to correct where tahrif was made. According to Torah, the people were tested when they met with an enemy so that they will not be engaged in eating and drinking activities. The Qur'an, on the other hand, claims that the army met with the enemy after they were tested. This was done so the King should know who is faithful and who is not. This is quiet logical and sounds perfect. Otherwise, the story would have become purposeless and meaningless. Thus there is no historical compression and there is no confusion at all.

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No.8 According to the story of Bible Saul did not involve Goliath who came on the scene much later when Saul had sinned against God in blatant disobedience. The Qur'an implied that David was serving with Saul in the first battle, which took place in about 1025 B.C. As I mentioned earlier that the author wants to judge on the basis of the facts narrated in the Biblical stories and seeks details in the Qur'an of those stories. The Qur'an in fact is the authentic word of God and has been declared so by the many European scholars. It is the habit of some of the orientalist that they suggest some hypothesis and then they try to build a story on it. In this case, the main theme of the author is to declare the Prophet of Islam not being a true messenger of God. This is the statement, which is shown in his conclusion. In this story the Qur'an did not say that David helped Saul in the first war. The Qur'an has merely mentioned a story. It did not say that it was the first one or the second one. According to Bible Goliath was not the commander of the Palestinian army as has been said in the Qur'an. The Bible says that Goliath was here. There are two answers to these questions. Firstly, there is no difference between hero and commander. Secondly, the Bible says that Goliath was in front of the forces. This certainly implies that he was the commander. The author wants to say that Muhammad had heard these stories from the Jews and had narrated them in order to achieve his purpose. These sorts of objections were raised in the lifetime of the Prophet as well. Therefore, the objections do not carry weight. The author wants that the Prophet should have mentioned the same words as had been mentioned in the Bible. Is that not a mere wish! The author

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says that because the Qur'an changed its statements on the Jesus, therefore, he needed to changed here as well.

Conclusion:

The Quranic story of Talut exhibits no historical inaccuracy. Muhammad peace be upon him does narrate the stories of the previous times but this does not mean that he was motivated by the circumstances to do so. He was a true Prophet and he said only that part of the Qur'an what was revealed to him. He was not in the position to speak of his own accord. The mention of the whole story by all its details was not required and nor it was the function of the Qur'an to give all the details. For this reason, to claim that this is not revelation and that Muhammad was not the Prophet is not fair and shows ignorance on the part of the author. Muhammad peace be upon him was an effective communicator. He presented truth and reality to the whole mankind. By means of all standards he was true and seal of the Prophets.

OBJECTION NO. 12:

A SAMARITAN TEMPTING THE ISRAELITES IN THE MOSES TIME

In the story of incident with the golden calf we read.

He (ALLAH) said, "We have tempted the people since thou didst leave them. The Samaritan has led them into error. Then Moses returned..... and we cast them (gold ornaments) as the Samaritan also threw them, into the fire. (Then he brought out for them a calf, a mere body that lowed, and they said. This is your god, as the god of Moses, whom he has forgotten.)"..... Moses, said and thou, Samaritan, what was thy business?

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Sura 20:85-88, 95

How can a Samaritan have led the Israelites astray at the time of Moses (about 1400 B.C.) When the city of Samaria was founded by king Omri in about 870 B.C. (see 1 kings 16:24)? But “the Samaritans” as a distinct people only emerged after the exile of the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the resettlement of the area under king Sargon II in after 722 B.C. With non-Israelites which then adopt a syncretism between the religions of the Jews and their own polytheistic background. Hence, it is historically impossible that a Samaritan could have led the Israelites into idolatry in the time of Moses. This is another time compression of at least 500, but rather 700 years. It is interesting to notice that while Yusuf Ali attempts to change, this word to “Samiri” and Pickthall to “As Samiri” Arberry in the English, and Kasimirski in the French both correctly translate it “Samaritan”. Yusuf Ali, in his footnotes, “bends over back wards” to explain his choice by suggesting that the name could mean “Shemer”. Which denotes a stranger, or “Shomer” which means a watchman, the equivalent of “Samara” in Arabic, which he implies is close enough to the Samari he is looking for. But the Arabic simply does not give Ali the way to concoct other meanings for this word. To be consistent with the Arabic he should keep his translation consistent with the text, as Arberry and kasimirski have done.

According to Thomas Patric Hughes “Dictionary of Islam” page 564, al-Baidawi says (about As-Samiri) that his name is Musa ibn Zafar, of the tribe of Samaritans.

Where does this confusion come from? These are two main passages in the Holy scriptures that deal with calf idols.

After the reign of Solomon the children of Israel were divided in the Southern Kingdom of Judah and the Northern Kingdom of Israel but still the only legitimate place of worship

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was the temple in Jerusalem. Probably in order to legitimize his rules, Jeroboam I also instituted places of worship in his Kingdom and put up a calf in each of them (1 kings 12:26-33). But God clearly denounced this as pagan through his prophets (v.30:3 kings 10:29; 17:16; 2 chronicles 13:8) Samaria later became the capital of this (Northern) kingdom of Israel. But there is one very clear passage in the Prophet Hosea which might be the root of the confusion between the two "Calf worship" incidents, the one in the desert at Moses time, and the other in the kingdom with capital Samaria.

Throughout your calf-idol, O Samaria my anger burns against them. How long will they be incapable of purity? They are from Israel, this calf, a craftsman has made it. It is not God. It will be broken in pieces that calf of Samaria.... Hosen 8:5-6.

The Quranic account continues in 20:27 with

(Moses) said "Get the gone, but thy (punishment) will be that thou will say. Touch me not.....Now look at thy god, of whom you hast become a devoted worshipper. We will certainly burn it in blazing fire and scatter in broadcast in the sea!"

See the close connection between the two accounts. It is "that calf of Samaria" (Hosea) and the Samaritan was its "devoted worshiper (Qur'an). And in both accounts God announces to destroy it. But there is one more parallel with the Samaritans in the Bible and the Samiri/Samaritans in the Quranic story. His punishment will be that he is "Untouchable". Which means "impure" exactly the way the Jews viewed the Samaritans because of their idolatry, starting in Ezra's time and up to today. These parallels are very clear. And it is also clear that there were no Samaritans until 700 years after Moses. Muhammad has traveled around in the Middle East and would have known about the Samaritans as well as the contempt of the Jews for the Samaritans

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and that they are “Untouchable” because of their idolatry. The only thing Muhammad does is trying to explain this contempt of the Jews for the Samaritan but makes the mistake to connect it to the wrong golden calf.

One last question to ponder. If “as-samirii” does not mean the Samaritan how else would you express “The Samritan” in Arabic? There is still to this day a small Samaritan community in the Middle East. How are they called in Arabic?

Answer 12:

The learned author has raised the objection that how can a Samaritan have led the Israelites at the time of Moses (about 1400 B.C.) when the city of Samaria was founded by king Omri in about 870 B.C. According to him, it is historically impossible that a Samaritan could have led the Israelites into idolatry in the time of Moses. This is another time compression of at least 500, but rather 700 years.

The author does not accept the translation of Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Pickthal but accepts the translation of Arberry and Kasimirski which itself shows that we were misled. According to Yusuf and Pickthal, the man who led them astray was Samiri or As-Samiri. While the latter translate it Samaritan, Abdullah Yusuf Ali has given other suggestions to the word as Shemer or Shomer, which means a stranger or watchman respectively, but the author does not accept them because it does not fulfill his purpose.

He further narrates that there is one clear passage in the Prophet Hosea, which might be the root of confusion between the two calf worship incidents, the one in the desert at Moses time, and other is the kingdom with capital Samaria. The Quranic incident shows that incident took place in Moses time when Moses said, “Get the gone, but thy (punishment) will be that thou will say

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touch me not.... Now look at thy god of whom you hast become a devoted worshipper. We will certainly burn it in blazing fire and scattering the dust in the sea.” The author after quoting these incidents claims that there were no Samaritans at Moses time. He himself claims that there were two incidents and yet says that there were no Samritans at Moses time. According to a commentator, it is quiet possible that there were living to me having same names but living at different times. Samaritans were a nation in olden times that lived in Iraq in the Prophet Abraham’s time. It is possible that some of the people may have survived by that time. That is why the people of Northern Palestine were called Samaritans. According to Abdul Kalam Azad, as-Samiri was from that nation. He further says that these people originally lived in Iraq but later they were scattered in Egypt and its outskirts. One of the men of that nation became the disciple of Moses and followed him when they left Israel and were roaming in Sinai. Further, the Samaritan was a tribe among other tribes of Bani Asrael. That is why he is called a Samaritan.

OBJECTION NO. 13:

MOSES AND THE GOSPEL?

In Sura 7:155-157 we find a prayer by Moses and then ALLAH’s response to him (Yusuf Ali’s translation).

The structure of the text is clear and the various parts are highlighted with different colors. 155-156a is Moses praying to ALLAH for mercy and forgiveness. Then, in 156a (second part of verse 156) ALLAH’s response to Moses begins and it continues through to the end of 157. ALLAH gives criteria for the people whom he will be merciful with, introducing each criterion with “Those, who.....” (1) do right (2) believe (3) follow the messenger.

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Then in 158 a new discourse begins. In Yusuf Ali's Qur'an, it is set apart even more strongly by giving it the header [Section 20]". In verse 158 then the text continues with ALLAH's command to Muhammad to recite that he is this messenger, the unlettered prophet. That was mentioned to Moses in verse 157, As such, 157 is the preparation of 158, the authentication for Muhammad that he is indeed a true prophet from God because he has already been foretold in the Torah and the Gospel.

Isn't that powerful proof for the Prophethood of Muhammad?

I would be part of positive evidence if it were true. But there are two major problems with this claim.

Many verses in the Qur'an make clear that the Gospel is given to Jesus – but Jesus was born over a thousand years [about 1400] after Moses. For ALLAH to speak to Moses and say that the people can find the unlettered prophet mentioned in the Gospel is a strong anachronism since the Gospel is not available to Moses and will not be available for another 1400 years.

"Those who follow the messenger the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures), in the law and the Gospel".

This is one of several time compressions which are found in the Qur'an, i.e. stories involving several persons who in historical reality are separated by hundreds of years.

The obvious problem is that since the Gospel has not yet been revealed at Moses time, nobody was able to find anything in this non existing gospel. Muhammad was indeed unlettered i.e. not well educated in the earlier scriptures, and this is a quite obvious blunder which is hard to reconcile with divine authorship, let alone with the direct speech of God in response to Moses.

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A second problem surfaces when we focus on the phrase “the unlettered” the Gospel is missing and mentioning of an unlettered prophet.

There are prophecies about future prophet’s particularly about “the prophet like Moses” but the Qur'an gives one and only one distinctive characteristics by which we may recognize which prophecy is meant and this characteristic is that the prophet is referred to as unlettered. But that is a false statement since now here is the Torah or the Gospel is a prophet called “unlettered”. If that which is given an evidence of authenticity for Muhammad’s Prophethood turns out to be false, what is the conclusion we have to draw from that?

Answer 13:

MOSES AND THE GOSPEL?

In this objection two questions are raised.

1. Many verses in the Qur'an make clear that the Gospel is given to Jesus – but Jesus was born over a thousand years after Moses. For ALLAH to speak Moses and say that people can find the unlettered Prophet mentioned in the Gospel is a strong anachronism since the Gospel is not available to Moses and will not be available for another 1400 years.
2. A second problem surfaces when we focus on the phrase “unlettered” we find no mentioning of “unlettered prophet” in the Gospel.

The answer to the first objection is very simple that Q.7, 157 do not speak to Moses. It is referred to the people of that time that “Those who follow the Messenger, The unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own scriptures-in the Law and

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the Gospel-For he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, and follow the light which is sent down with him. It is they who will prosper.” Now, from the verse it is very much clear that it has nothing to do with Moses. It rather speaks for Muhammad peace be upon him. Similarly the Verse 158 also speaks for Muhammad peace be upon him. So the claim of the author that the verse 157 is the preparation for 158 stands nowhere.

The answer to the second problem needs explanation. In the reflex of the Torah as now accepted by the Jews, Moses says: “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me”. (Deut, xviii. 15): the only Prophet who brought a Shariah like that of Moses was Muhammad Mustafa and he came of the house of Ismail, the brother of Isaac, the father of Israel. In the reflex of Gospel as now accepted by the Christians Christ promised another comforter (John xiv, 6) the Greek work Paraclete which the Christians interpret as referring to the Holy Spirit is by our Doctors taken to be periclyte, which would be Greek form of Ahmād. See Q, 61:6.

If the exact word “unlettered” is not mentioned in the Torah or Injil, it does not mean that the prophecy of Muhammad Mustafa is not mentioned in the Holy Scriptures. As a matter of fact the Christians and Jews of that time knew that “unlettered” is referred to Muhammad as this name was given to the progeny of Ismail. The Qur'an has claimed that the Prophet Muhammad with all his signs is present in the Scriptures. If it were not so every Jew and Christian would have raised the issue. They would have certainly rejected the Qur'an. But they did not do so. This implied

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that they were clear in their minds that Muhammad is the same Prophet, which is mentioned in the Qur'an. 99.

Final Conclusion:

The Qur'an is word of ALLAH, not of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) the ALLAH says, "We have revealed the Qur'an and will preserve it". The Qur'an was collected in the lifetime of the Prophet. It was endorsed by his first Caliph and then the third Caliph made an acceptable copy of it. Through the Centuries to come it was memorized and recorded accordingly. No discrepancy can be claimed in the Qur'an. However, there is seeming contradiction in the Qur'an, it is the human mind which become unable to comprehend it. So one has to reconcile the verses with his knowledge.

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